

THE ØRISHA PROJECT

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The Orisha Project is the umbrella organization for two initiatives. Our mission is to educate the public on black history and experience.



Basic Black is an eLearning academy providing modular history courses, with the beginnings of humankind in Africa. The course design is based on cognitive load theory. The curriculum chronicles culture, innovation, language and migration, moving to relevant modern science, current events and creative solutions.

<https://basicblack.io>

Bones of the Mother is an immersive online game that allows players to experience life while black. Beginning in Africa, players must complete an initial quest to find the matriarchal line of the One Mother. Using ancient hieroglyphs as guides, they travel through time to join in historical events around the world.

<https://bonesofthemothert.io/>

Basic Black

There are hundreds of websites - at minimum - that attempt to bridge the knowledge gap of black history. As awareness of the systemic nature of racism grows, there will be more. The 1619 Project is an amazing initiative, but it begins with American history. It begins with slavery.

There is value in their efforts, but the origins of black people are not American. To accept that premise is to mislead on the origins of humanity.

Our initiative will attempt to chronicle the history of black people. We will begin in Africa, as they did. The objective is to increase the knowledge of the ancestry of the human race.

A founding principle of our effort is to restore a shared understanding of human ancestry necessary to pursue the common good.

THE DESIGN

Basic Black is an eLearning academy using modern technology to capture history lessons. We propose video or audio courses, with a text transcript available. The design is modular, combining five to eight short “sprints” to cover a specific topic. A typical course will include between two to three hours of material. Some courses will be interactive, others narrated. All are self-paced and are currently geared to ages 16 and up.

It is important to understand these are lessons. Many video platforms present ideas or expertise - Ted Talks, Master Class - our mission is education. A template is provided to help our “teachers” present their content in that mode. Our design is built on cognitive learning theory.

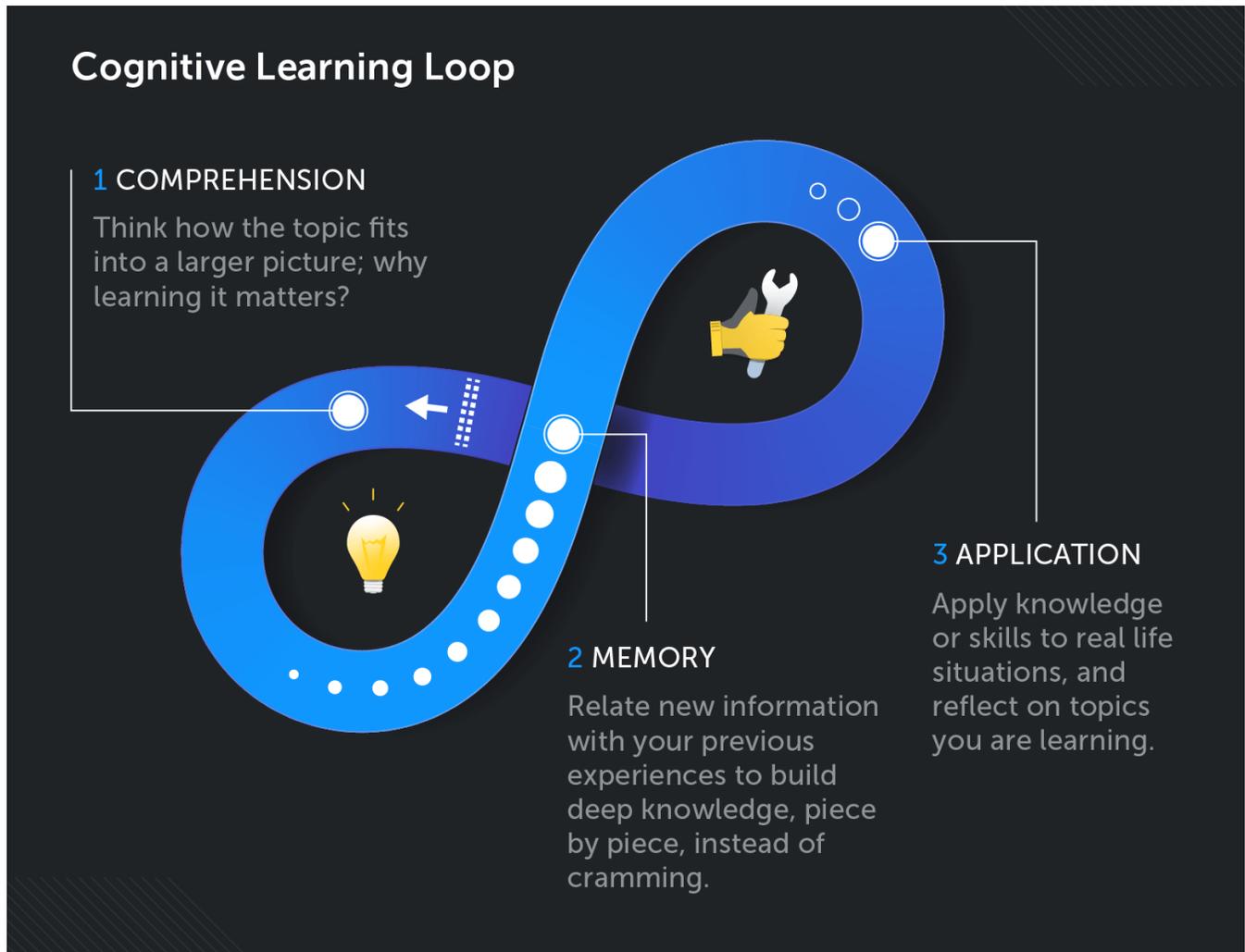


Figure 1: Image source <https://www.valamis.com/hub/cognitive-learning>

Students should be capable of processing and interpreting information to form their perspective. For information to be retained in memory, it must be integrated socially and behaviorally. As such each course will include a call to action. Homework assignments and quizzes are incorporated into the lesson plan template.

WHAT WE KNOW

There is less need for rote memorization in learning now. Information is available online - from facts to formulas to photographs. An off-shoot of cognitive learning theory is [Cognitive Load Theory](#), which explains the brain’s limitation for comprehending all the incoming information it receives. Working memory can be trapped by information overload.

The extension of working memory occurs by tapping into the previous experience of the student. This allows them to process information by adding to an existing schema. Sensory information is processed differently than explanatory text. Narrated courses contribute to retention by reducing the load on working memory.

We prioritize a student's ability to process, interpret, and retain information from our classes. Our objective is to provoke thought, discussion, dissent, advocacy, and investigation in the real world. It's our hope students find a purpose and a call-to-action in their communities.

THE EDUCATORS

Our presenters may or may not be credentialed teachers or professors. We have a preference for people who are passionate about sharing their expertise. A teacher who can create purpose for their students is held in the highest regard.

But we expect them to align with a lesson plan. We will provide a template and support to create their course outline. Optional materials can be made available if they are available at no additional cost.

Educators will be qualified in their topic and of any ethnicity. Our classes will remain focused on what the student came to learn.

AREAS OF STUDY

The preliminary group of courses are broken into 4 segments. They may have subcategories within them. These may be updated or revised as we move forward.

- **Before February** series looks at the history of African people, culture, lifestyle, and global migration.
- **Future Past** series looks at ancient discoveries with the fresh eyes of modern science.
- **Modern History** series chronicles the life experiences of black people in the past 200 years.
- **True Dat** series is an advocacy platform that brings forward fresh ideas for leadership and advocacy.

PRICING

We will offer a one-off, pay-per-course option, as well as a subscription model. We plan to create a scholarship fund as soon as possible. We are seeking advice on how we can partner with high schools/community colleges to further the distribution of the material.

Some courses will build upon each other and have prerequisites. The pay-per-course plan will offer a discounted bundle for the package.

The subscription model will be tiered. Students can choose for all courses by one teacher, one segment of the curriculum, or a specific number of classes in any segment.

We want to design a model to donate 10% of net revenue to a charitable cause for the presenter. It's unclear if we will designate a pool of money to be split equally or be based on the purchases of individual courses.

Closing

The Orisha Project is just beginning. We have a small group of advisers and are putting together our LLC. We are seeking feedback and input from people with expertise. Educators, gamers, activists - we welcome your input and support. Thank you.